CLAIMS

1. A method for processing coins introduced in a coin tester (20) of an automatic unit delivering goods or services, said coin tester containing a selector (24), a pre-receptacle (32s), at least one reserve (32) for recycling certain coins, including several locations (50), each location (50) being able to receive only one coin of any value, a bowl (26) for giving back the coins, and a safe (34), of the type including, for each introduced coin:

- a step (100) for receiving and identifying the coin;
- a step (100) for temporarily storing the coin in the pre-receptacle;
- a step (108) for giving back the coin or a step (110) for collecting the coin into the safe (34) or into the reserve (32),

characterized in that the step (110) for collecting the coin includes a step (116) for determining whether the coin should be stored in the safe (34) or in the reserve (32), according to conditions relating to the value of the coin, and to the number of coins which have the same value as the new coin, which are present in the reserve (32).

2. The method according to claim 1, characterized in that the collection step (110) consists of storing the coin in the safe (34), if the reserve (32) is full, or if, according to the value of coin, the number of coins which have the same value as the new coin and which are present in the reserve (32), is equal to a determined maximum number of coins.

3. The processing method according to claim 2, characterized in that the maximum number of coins of certain values is different from the maximum number of coins of certain other values.

4. The method according to the preceding claim, characterized in that in that for certain determined coin

values the maximum number of coins of this value is equal to the capacity of the reserve (32).

5. The method according to the preceding claim, characterized in that the maximum number of coins of each value is predetermined.

6. The method according to any of claims 1 to 4; characterized in that it includes a periodic step (112) for calculating the maximum number of coins of each value able to be stored in the reserve (32), according to the amounts of coins of each value received and taken out from the reserve (32) during a first determined period, and according to the maximum number of coins of each value as determined during the preceding calculation step (112).

7. The method according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the step (118) for collecting the coin into the reserve (32) consists of storing the coin in any empty location (50) of the reserve (32).

8. The method according to any of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the step (118) for collecting the coin into the reserve (32) consists of storing the coin in a determined empty location (50) of the reserve (32) according to the value of the coin.

9. The method according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the step (118) for collecting the coin by storing it in the reserve (32), includes a step (122) for storing in memory the location (50) and the value of the coin.

10. The method according to any of the preceding claims, of the type including a step (108) for giving back the change which consists of transferring at least one coin from the reserve (32) to a bowl (26) distinct from the safe (34) and from the reserve (32), characterized in that the step (108) for giving back the change includes a step (126) for determining the value of the coin to be transferred, according to the maximum number of coins of each value, and according to the number of coins of each value present in the reserve (32).

11. The method according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that it includes a periodic step, with a longer period as said first period, for manually loading the reserve (32), so that it contains the maximum number of coins of each value.

12. A device (20) for storing coins of different values, implementing a method according to any of the preceding claims, of the type including a selector (24), a magazine (28) for receiving and recycling the introduced coins, a safe for storing coins, and a bowl (26) for giving back the coins,

characterized in that the magazine (28) includes a pre-receptacle (32s) and at least one reserve (32) for recycling certain coins, said reserve (32) including several locations (50), each location (50 being able to receive a single coin of any value.

13. The device according to the preceding claim, characterized in that it includes an electronic programmable control device.

14. The device according to the preceding claim, characterized in that the electronic control device includes means for identifying each location (50) and for storing in memory the contents of the location (50).

15. The device according to the preceding claim, characterized in that the locations (50) are mobile within the magazine (28) and that the electronic control device includes means (90) for detecting the position of each location (50).

16. The device according to any of claims 8 to 10, characterized in that it includes means (22) for identifying each coin and for determining the location associated with the coin.

17. The device according to any of the preceding claims, characterized in that the magazine includes a pre-receptacle (32s) and a reserve (32).